

**National Marine Sanctuary Program
Advisory Council Information Bulletin
December 2003**

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Robert Schwemmer, West Coast Cultural Resource Coordinator, presented a paper on the history and 80-year anniversary of the shipwreck *Cuba* lost on San Miguel Island at the 6th edition of the California Islands Symposium. The symposium is a multidisciplinary conference focusing on recent research and resource management efforts on the California Islands and their surrounding marine environments and was held in Ventura, California December 1-3. Schwemmer also presented at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum about the history and loss of the California gold rush passenger steamer *Winfield Scott*, which marooned over 450 passengers on Anacapa Island. The public lecture on December 2nd commemorated the 150-year anniversary. Both vessels were owned by Pacific Mail Steamship Co. and serviced the same route between San Francisco and Panama but were lost 70 years apart.

Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Sanctuary staff led a group of NOAA Weather Service officials on a field trip to the sanctuary. The National Weather Service staff members were in American Samoa to attend the dedication of the new NWS office in Tafuna.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Resource Specialist Lauri MacLaughlin continued to direct the transplantation of corals out of harms way where construction is in progress in Truman Harbor. Lauri continues to work closely with Navy contractor, Continental Shelf Associates, to preserve these corals. Approximately 350 corals were removed from the construction areas. Many were transplanted to beneficial sites at Ft Zachary Taylor State Park and a site at Marker 17 Northwest Ship Channel. In addition, corals were transferred through collaborative agreements to nursery programs at MOTE marine lab Summerland Key and the Florida Aquarium in Tampa, FL.

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary made a good showing at the 2004 Texas Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching, in Houston, Texas. Over 5,000 science teachers from around the state attended the conference. Seven alumni of the annual Down Under, Out Yonder education workshop contributed a total 36 hours of time to talk to other teachers about the sanctuary. Sanctuary staff Sarah Bernhardt and Shelley Du Puy co-presented "Zeroing in on Biological Zones of the Flower Garden Banks." Sanctuary volunteers also participated. Education Specialist Sarah Bernhardt was recognized for "Outstanding Marine Education by a Non-classroom Educator", and Shelley Du Puy and the sanctuary were recognized for "Outstanding Marine Education by an Organization" by the Texas Marine Educators Association.

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Sand crab monitoring season drew to a close. On October 6, twenty environmental science students from Tamalpais High School in Mill Valley made their way over the coastal mountains to Muir Beach to collect, examine and return where they were found the plentiful crabs recovered from various strata in the sand. On Oct 13, biology students from Thurgood Marshall Academy of San Francisco monitored Ocean Beach for sand crabs. After navigating the bus system, twenty-two students and their teacher, who was trained at the sanctuary's summer teacher workshop, sampled and found plenty of sand crabs.

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary hosted a booth with educational activities for students invited to board the *Ka'imikai-o-Kanaloa* to learn about the recent 64-day cruise to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. This project was funded by NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration in collaboration with the Hawai'i Undersea Research Laboratory.

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

On October 29, Monitor staff conducted an archaeological survey of a 25-foot-long segment of the hull of a wooden ship. The wreckage had been reported by a local resident to the Old Coast Guard Station who, in turn, reported it to the sanctuary office. Since the Virginia historic preservation office does not have an underwater archaeologist, the Maritime Archaeology Center conducted the survey as an outreach and community cooperation project. The hull probably belonged to a large schooner from the mid-19th century. The survey was covered by the local CBS affiliate.

In conjunction with the Portland Symposium, Stellwagen Bank and *Monitor* and Maritime Archaeological Center staff attended the Maritime Heritage Program Coordinators Meeting November 4-5 in Portland, Maine.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Sanctuary staff were notified by the Coast Guard at 11:00 AM on November 19th that a Coast Guard vessel on patrol 2 miles west of Point Lopez, Big Sur had reported a slick of heavy crude oil 3 miles wide by 10 miles long. The Coast Guard crew had detected the oil at 10:30 AM (PST). The sanctuary began coordinating with several State and Federal agencies to determine appropriate response action. At 1:00 PM, the Coast Guard launched a helicopter to confirm and refine the earlier assessment. The aerial survey revealed three small slicks (averaging 50X100 yards each) dispersed over a 15-mile range. It is possible that the slicks were intermingled with a large algal bloom, giving the appearance of a heavy slick with interspersed sheens. The strong aromatic odor from the slicks may have contributed to the original report of a large spill event. The sheens have apparently dispersed and inspections along the shoreline have detected no oiled habitat or wildlife.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

Beginning in late November, the sanctuary will commence the working group phase of its management plan review. In the fall of 2002, scoping meetings were held throughout New England to collect public concerns regarding the management of the sanctuary. In the past year, sanctuary staff and the sanctuary advisory council worked to identify 12 main issues

raised during the scoping process; these issues are the basis for the working groups. Each working group will address one of the 12 issues that range from topics such as ecosystem alteration to vessel strikes on marine mammals. Completion of the working group phase is expected by the spring of 2004. The product of each working group will be an action plan that will help form the basis for the new management plan.

Several sanctuary representatives (headquarters, *Monitor*, Stellwagen Bank) participated in the Portland Symposium, November 6-7, to hear from experts on the history of the sinking of the *Portland* in 1898. The event was sponsored by the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the Portland Harbor Museum. Approximately 60 people attended to discuss the many facets of the tragedy, including maritime transportation, social ramifications of the tragedy, weather forecasting 100 years ago and today, the discovery and confirmation of the *Portland* location and ongoing research. Participants also saw new high definition video footage of the wreck provided by the Science Channel. The Science Channel, which was represented at the symposium, announced that the hour-long documentary on the *Portland* would air for the first time on March 5, 2004 at 9 pm.

West Coast Sanctuaries

During the past couple of weeks hundreds of dead and live Northern Fulmars (*Fulmaris glacialis*) birds washed up on beaches in the Monterey Bay, Olympic Coast and Gulf of the Farallones national marine sanctuaries. Storms may bring in more carcasses. Sanctuary volunteers are surveying beaches to determine the abundance of dead Fulmars. About 160 of these birds were collected and dissected at California Department of Fish and Game, Marine Wildlife Veterinarian Care and Research Center, Santa Cruz to determine causes for the mass mortality. Preliminary reports indicate that the majority of Fulmars examined were starving, young birds.

Dan Basta, Michael Weiss, Mitchell Tartt and Brady Phillips attended the December 4 Half Moon Bay Sanctuary Advisory Council and public workshop to engage all interested members of the communities around the Monterey Bay and Gulf of the Farallones sanctuaries regarding the shared boundary between the two sites. The Program presented information analyzed to date, answered questions, and listened to Sanctuary Advisory Council and public concerns regarding the Joint Management Area. This input will help inform the final decision on how to proceed in the Joint Management Plan Review. The decision on the boundary is expected to be made by Jan. 31, 2004.

National Marine Sanctuary Program

On November 4, Jamie Hawkins (National Ocean Service) and Rebecca Lent (National Marine Fisheries Service) briefed the Pacific Fishery Management Council on marine protected areas. They addressed the Council's concerns over NOS/NMFS authorities and jurisdictions as to regulation of fisheries and establishment of marine protected areas. The presentation was well received by the council. Jamie and Rebecca proposed that a memorandum of understanding between the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and the Council be drafted that defines the process on how they would work together on matters of mutual interest. The Memorandum of Understanding would be modeled on one that is currently in use between the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

From November 10-21, sanctuary staff led Luke Nachbar, NOAA's Office of Finance and Administration, and Bob Williams, NOAA Fisheries, through the four California sanctuaries to educate them about accomplishments in the signage, exhibits and facilities arena. The meeting provided perspective for the NMSP California Regional Facilities/Exhibits/Signage Plan, which is currently undergoing its final edits.

On December 8, Matt Stout, Dan Basta and Margo Jackson met with representatives from the Marine Manufacturers Association. The Association, which manufactures a myriad of items related to boats, represents a host of marine industries, namely 12,000 marinas around the country. They have over 2 million users. Upon further collaboration, the Association will develop a boater's guide for use in the sanctuaries. The Association will hold a conference May 3-4, 2004 in Washington D.C. in which the sanctuaries will participate.